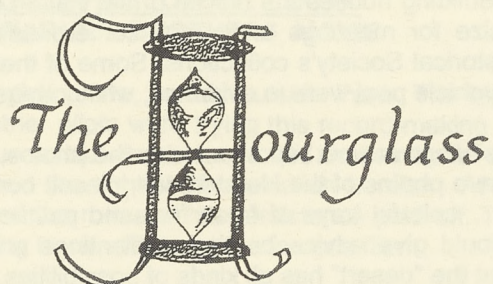


Historical Society of Palm Desert

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Community

Service

Collections

Archives

WINTER 2008

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GRAND OPENING OF HENDERSON COMMUNITY BUILDING NEW HOME OF PALM DESERT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE DEDICATION OF ERIC JOHNSON MEMORIAL GARDENS

The public was introduced to the new environmentally sensitive building which has been in the construction stage for quite some time. Citizens filled all the available parking spaces at Entrada Del Paseo on Saturday morning at 9:00 am, October 11, 2008. Councilman Bob Spiegel and other dignitaries spoke to seated guests about Palm Desert's latest project, a building to memorialize the siblings of the Henderson family. Their actions and aspirations were the nucleus of the growth and development that blossomed into the beautiful City of Palm Desert.

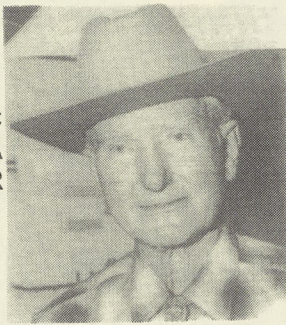
Nelson and Catherine Henderson had five children. These are listed in order of birth and with the effort they expended relevant to our local history:

- 1) Randall: Built the first substantial commercial building in the cove and published Desert Magazine from that building, which also housed the Southwest Art Gallery and various small shops. He donated land for the first library on Portola Avenue.
- 2) Carl: Was a realtor who acted in that capacity to sell property in the new community.
- 3) Phil: Acted as a partner to his brother, Cliff, in many projects. He died shortly after the beginning of the post-war desert community.
- 4) Cliff: Was an administrator and developer who had many successes in his life before starting on his plan for a community in the desert of California. He envisioned, initiated, fathered, and played watch-dog to insure that his dream was not sullied by anything inferior. He built Shadow Mountain Club, and donated land for a fire house, a school, and a church.
- 5) Dorris: Was the "baby sister" who loved and encouraged her brothers in their endeavors. She married Tommy Tomson, a renowned landscape architect, who contributed significantly to the desert community. He designed the street layout and landscaping for some of the major building projects.

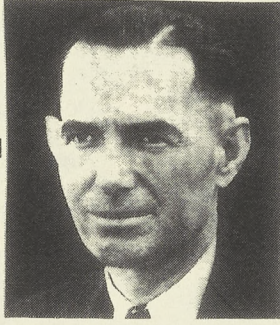
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The Henderson Community Building houses the offices of the Palm Desert Chamber of Commerce. It includes three other rooms of significant size for meetings and small conferences. The principal interior decoration consists of enlarged photos from the Historical Society's collections. Some of these are aerials from the very earliest days when Palm Village and the Patton vehicle pool were in evidence; while others depict the gradual formation of the city.

As yet, all of the Henderson siblings are not represented in the photos, so there is still more to be done in that respect. If you or anyone you know have photos of the Hendersons, please contact the Society. The dedication ceremony also included light refreshments ... colorful trays of fresh fruit and pastries. Booths outside the Visitors' Center featured literature and people who could give advice on desert plantings and gardening. The beauty of the Eric Johnson Memorial Gardens proves that the "desert" has all kinds of possibilities.

TWO BROTHERS (of the Henderson Family)

By Virginia Folkers, HSPD Curator

Cliff and Randall were two brothers,
As different as day and night,
As different as black and white.

Yes, they were raised in the same home,
With a sister and two other brothers,
And influenced by a Quaker mother.

Randall was a right-brained person,
The written word embraced his mind,
Mountain and desert his best find.

Cliff was left-brained, with visions
Of building and doing his best,
Of working and passing the test.

Palm Desert was lucky to have both,
Knowing comfort and beauty supreme,
'Cause two brothers followed their dream.

FALL LUNCHEON AT JILLIAN'S -- October 21, 2008

Marcy Gregory did a masterful work of chairing this delightful affair which was enjoyed by members and their guests. Dining on delicious gourmet dishes served in the atmosphere of the 1940's in Randall Henderson's apartment home for his employees was an experience we will long remember. Since it was a warm day, everyone opted not to dine on the central patio, but in the individual rooms which bordered it.

President Barbara Keedy Eastes held the program together with a microphone by a circuitous route. Four of the City's Council graced the event with their presence, and Mayor Jean Benson performed the installation ceremony for Board Officers and Directors. Jay and June Trubee, owners of the restaurant and also chief chef and hostess, were presented with a proclamation from the City of Palm Desert in honor of the historic significance of the building. We extend our appreciation to everyone who worked to make this luncheon a success.

NEW BUSINESS MEMBERS

Backstreet Bistro
Wayne Carlton Connor & Assoc.
Desert Buy Palm Springs, Inc.
Frasca Jewelers, Inc.
Jillian's Restaurant
J. Russell Salon & Spa

Moller's Garden Supply
Pinnacle Design Company
Polo Ralph Lauren Corporation
Protravel International
Prest Vuksic Architects, Inc.
Robert D. Reed, D.D.S.

RGA Landscape Architects, Inc.
Ritzi Rover Pet Grooming
Roberge Corporation
Spectacular Shades
Sundance Cleaners
The Upper Crust

RENEWING BUSINESS MEMBERS

Bradley Electric, Inc.
Casuelas Café
C.O.D. Alumni Foundation

Full Gallop Marketing
Godecke Clark, C.P.A.
Keedy's Fountain & Grill

Jean Martin, C.P.A.
Rover Law Firm
Shadow Mountain Resort & Club

NEW MEMBERS

Contributing Charles Rennie

Individual:

Corinne Bjerke Honorable Gordon Cologne
Paula Ford Vera O'Larry Handley
Neil Lingle Jim Anderson
Linda Biggi Adele Sandman

Family:

Ron & Angel Bjerke Mike & Linda McConnell
Sue Eberle & Larry Cohen Mary Paciero & Barbara La Casse
Donna Ernst & Mark Pachacki Mardy Willson & Robin Sproul

"THE SPIRIT OF ST. LOUIS"
A WARNER BROTHERS MOVIE

On May 21, 1927 "Lucky Lindy", a single engine plane, landed outside Paris. The trip between New York and Paris had taken 33 hours and 30 minutes. Many other pilots were trying this record-making trip in those days, but they had all crashed and lost their lives. This single successful endeavor proved that air travel was limitless. It also proved that Charles A. Lindbergh, a pioneering flyboy, had the right stuff of aviation heroism. At first James Stewart was turned down for the lead in this movie, but he wanted the role and his persistence paid off. The picture was directed by Billy Wilder, and based on the Pulitzer-Prize winning book written by the famous flier.

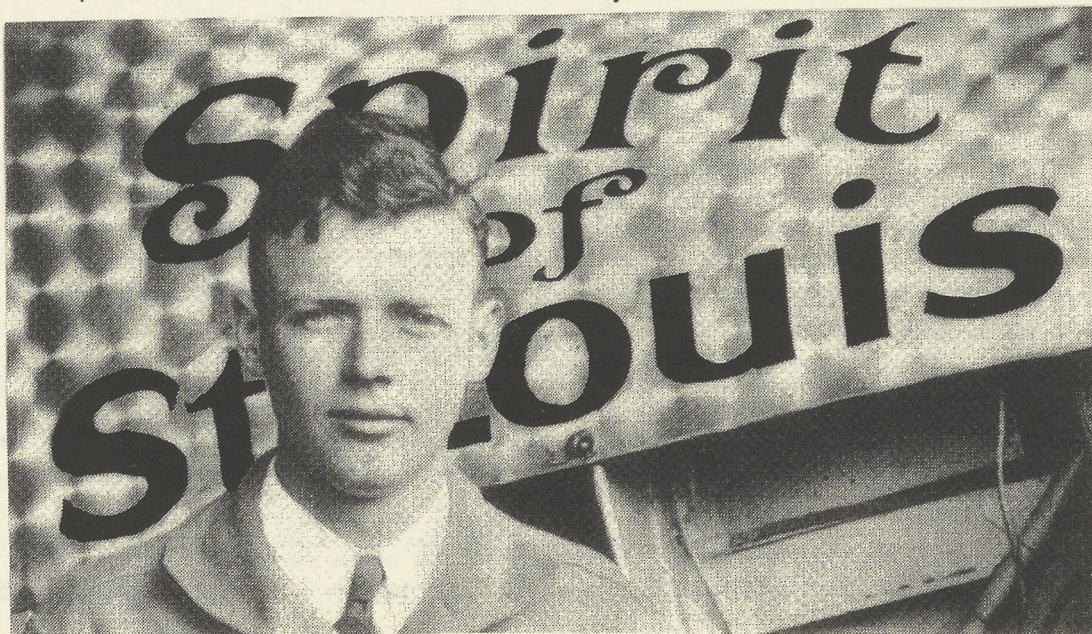
He had been a U.S. Air Mail deliverer between St. Louis and Chicago. On one particular run he took off in a blinding snow storm. Suddenly the engine stopped; but over Peoria, Illinois there was a minimum of lighting so he couldn't see where to land, he parachuted out, the plane crashed, and he took a train to St. Louis.

With an audacious goal upper-most in his mind, the young pilot called a New York company and asked if they could build a single-wing, single-engine plane that would accommodate a 6 ft. 3-1/2 in. pilot for \$15,000. The reply was "yes"; but when they were \$2,000 and 40 hours into the project, they told Lindbergh that they wouldn't sell unless they could choose the pilot.

He took a train to San Diego to consult with the owners of the Ryan-Mahony Company, and asked if they could build the plane he required in 90 days? Lindbergh stayed in San Diego and watched the wooden frame with canvas covering and paint take shape. When they wanted to install a periscope in the instrument panel, the pilot said he preferred to use dead reckoning ... he was always mindful that keeping the plane as light as possible was crucial. The plane was finished in 63 days, weighed 5,000 pounds, and they tested it at Dutch Flats. A San Diego newspaper carried a story of two French fliers who had left New York that morning, but on the way to Paris they crashed in Newfoundland and were killed. Lindbergh flew his new plane from California to St. Louis in 15 hours and 25 minutes; it would be another 7 hours to New York.

For seven days and nights Lindbergh waited in a hotel room for the rain to stop, he couldn't sleep; others were getting the plane ready. A drenched crowd had gathered in anticipation of seeing his take-off. A young lady from Philadelphia gave him a compact with a small mirror that was taped into the plane so he could read the magnetic compass from the pilot's seat. The rain stopped, they put in 425 gallons of gas and started the plane with a spin of the propeller. With cotton in his ears, a leather helmet on his head, and goggles to protect his eyes he navigated an extremely muddy runway and barely missed the top of some trees at take-off. He was on his way!!

Two hours out, he had flown 200 miles of the 38 hours he had guestimated to Paris. He was exhausted by the time 4 hours had elapsed, since it had been 28 hours since he had slept. He dropped off to sleep and was awakened by a fly -- his lone traveling companion -- which landed on his cheek. He was over Nova Scotia, and 6 miles off course. *(His mind went back to when he traded \$425 and his motorcycle for his first Jenny plane.)* Now he



could see mountains below, and the fog was getting thicker all the time. He needed to find St. John's, his bearing to Iceland. *(He told the fly of his barnstorming days, when he charged \$5.00 for 10 minutes in the air. Then he had joined a flying circus, which featured parachutes, balloons, and smoke.)*

After flying 18 hours, the plane started losing altitude over the water because the exterior was icing up. He needed to get into warmer air for the ice to melt, and he did -- just in the nick of time. Flying by the stars was necessary because the compass was not working. Soon everything was working again, and Lindbergh dozed briefly. *(Could the fly be counted as extra weight? Only when it landed -- in flight it wouldn't add to the weight of the plane.)* Awake again, he spotted land after 28 hours ... it was Dingle Bay in Ireland.

Being hungry, he opened his sack lunch and found a St. Christopher medal given to him by one of his students, a priest. He hung the medal on the instrument panel. It was now 58 minutes to Paris; he would arrive at night. He had flown 33 hours when he saw many lights below where Frenchmen had gathered to greet him. He was so-o-o-o sleepy that his mind was having trouble tracking. Upon landing, a yelling crowd of 200,000 boosted him out of the plane and carried him on their shoulders. When he returned to the United States, four million people welcomed him in New York City with a ticker-tape parade. He had succeeded in doing what he was sure he could do ... And he did it!!!

"So, why," you may be asking, "Is the story of Charles Lindbergh appearing in a newsletter dedicated to the history of Palm Desert?" The answer is that this famous pilot was an associate of Cliff Henderson during the 12 years he managed the National Air Races. In fact, the first race took place in 1928, the year after Lindbergh's famous flight. To make this story doubly relevant, Jimmy Stewart was also a pilot who knew Cliff Henderson during World War II. Through our adventurous founder we have vicariously touched famous people and our local history has reached around the world.

DECEASED MEMBERS

Joseph Durnberger was born on June 15, 1926 in Sauk Centre, MN. He married Hazel Swafford on January 21, 1948 in Palm Springs and they celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary this year. Joseph served in the United States Navy from July 44 through February 1946. He was a supervisor for Hoams Swimming Pools for over 20 years.

Robert "Bobby" Rouche was born and raised in Pittsburgh, where he attended St. Francis University. He played football during his educational years and into the military; carrying the moniker "Irish Marine." With his vision, passion, and ability in business he had a career in the home textiles business that spanned five decades. Bob is survived by his wife, Mary, who is currently the mayor of Indian Wells.

Mary Gaugush was a cute little blond whose countenance will stay in our memories. Her smile lit up your world as it did for the staff of the City of Palm Desert for 25 years. During her time there, she worked her way up to the position of Administrative Secretary to the Director of Public Works & City Engineer; so when Dick Folkers came on the scene as director of that department in 1985, Mary Jo was his secretary. She knew the work inside out and upside down, and her boss counted his blessings hundreds of times during the years that followed. Mary married Joe Gaugush in October of 1992, and they fulfilled her dream of "seeing the world" through trips here and abroad. Big dogs were part of Mary's life as she and Joe shared a lovely home in Silver Spur Ranch. Memory problems from a premature onset of Alzheimer's disease caused her to resign from her job in 2002. Her condition deteriorated during six years of Joe's loving care; Mary died on October 8, 2008. Family and friends remembered her on November 8 in a tropical "Celebration of Life" at the Corsican Villa Clubhouse. Many spoke about their interaction with her, triggering both laughter and tears. Yes, we will all remember Mary -- she was one-of-a-kind.



PALM DESERT : THE BOOK

Arcadia Publishing will finish the printing and have it ready for us on or after 2-9-09 at a cost of \$21.99 plus tax. Thanks to Hal Rover for compiling photographs from private collections, and to Kim Housken and Brett Romer for assisting in the research and attending to last-minute details, we will soon have this treasure in our hands. It depicts the developing of the Palm Desert, and you will surely want a copy in your home.

GOLF CART PARADE

As usual our restored fire engine brought up the end of the parade on October 26. In addition our newly acquired Eisenhower golf cart was also entered this year. Unfortunately it developed a problem with the battery which caused it to smoke.

DONATIONS

Chamber of Commerce - paintings and framed pictures.

YARD SALE REPORT

Weekend of November 15 & 16 -- 7:00 a.m. till 1:00 p.m.

Despite the down-turn in the general economic scene, the sale netted \$4,288. Changes made for this year's annual sale included the addition of good used clothing and shoes. The Society thanks the following people:

Kermit Martin for his role in getting Burrtec Waste & Recycling Services to donate a 3-yard bin.

Hal Rover, Don Graybill, Dick Folkers, John Webster, Larry Bussiere for pick-ups, driving, & handling.

Jackie Damron	Helli Harrison	Gale Bocker	Kermit Martin	Brett & Rose Romer
Eric Vogt	Kim Housken	Adele Sandman	Mardy Willson	Don & Bev Graybill
Gloria Petitto	John Webster	Larry Bussieri	L. J. Rensuch	Hal & Angie Rover
Kent Smith	Bev Starcher	Colleen Tebeau	Marcy Gregory	Dick & Ginny Folkers
Jack & Bonnie Bowie	Paul & Eileen Snyder			

For pricing, set-up, helping on sale days, and clean-up.

Barbara Keedy Eastes and Anne Tuttle for general supervision and other sale-related jobs.

MINI-MUSTER REPORT

John and Madonna Marman are to be commended for yet another successful year chairing this popular fire-safety program which is conducted by the Society in conjunction with the Fire Dept. and Desert Sands Unified School District. The Marmans thanked everyone who volunteered for this event, especially Brett Romer for being present at all of the programs and for acting as official photographer. This is a very happy time for local third graders.

BOARD MEETING SUMMARIES

From notes by Past-President Dick Folkers

September: moved that business cards be printed in the Hourglass. The Eisenhower golf cart would be entered in the parade. Eastes would attend a disaster preparedness meeting at the city. Advertising for the yard sale was discussed. Phil Franklin would be given a HSPD cap for his birthday. Suggestions from a committee of Brett Romer, Gladys Hanousek, Birgit Moller on finance/planning: add education to mission statement, use mailing house for newsletter, temporary open only Fri. & Sat., donations in lieu of service, greeters for all functions, apply percentage of grants to operating budget, have donation envelopes for specific programs, sale of Palm Desert book, newsletter revisions, do one-year financial reserve, deploy a purchase order system, budget all events, web site sources, and insurance coverage. These suggestions will help us up-grade our "mission & purpose" statement, and provide a strategic plan to cover our expanding role as a museum.

October: Thank Yvonne Kelley for past Board service, fall luncheon/parade/yard sale discussed, book release party discussed, Marcy Gregory thanked for work on new members & renewals, help from RSVP Volunteer Group, City Redevelopment Agency made selection of photos for the Henderson Community Building. Miscellaneous thanks: Kim Housken for E-bay contacts, Don Graybill for outside labor, Brett Romer for Henderson Building photos, Board members for donating water & supplies for office & kitchen. Also Brett Romer for Hop-a-Long Cassidy photo research resulting in a \$170 sale to Don McLean. Feasibility of the Society taking on the Portola Community Center as a remedy for our problem with lack of space at the fire house.

November: A team of Barbara Eastes, Brett Romer, Kim Housken and Dick Folkers met with City Staff regarding our deficient space situation. The matter was taken to the City Council, which approved our use of the Portola Community Center for our 4th Friday lecture series in 2009. Use of one room for storage of archival material was also approved.

CHRISTMAS DISPLAY & SALE

The Society will have a holiday exhibit of choice decorations in the main room of the museum. Our industrious volunteers will "deck the halls" to help put you in the "here comes Santa Claus" mood. If your own collection needs a little lift or change from last year, we just might have what will do the trick. This display will be available for your pleasure through the month of December. Don't miss it !!!

MEMBERSHIP

Our financial situation is still very tight, so we are asking each member to bring in a regular or business member in 2008. You may consider a gift membership for family or friends -- through our history-rich "Hourglass" newsletter, they will be reminded of your generosity all year long; and volunteering provides a whole new group of friends.

Individual	\$ 25.00	Business	\$ 75.00
Family	\$ 30.00	Bronze	\$ 1000.00
Supporting	\$ 50.00	Silver	\$ 2500.00
Contributing	\$ 100.00	Gold	\$ 5000.00
Patron	\$ 250.00		

HOLIDAY GIFT--SHOPPING ?

Looking for something at a reasonable price that is in very good taste... and practical too? The Society has just what you are seeking. We have vintage note cards on heavy stock for only \$2.00 each or six for \$10.00. You won't find these anyplace else, as the Society has exclusive sales rights to these beauties.

SCHEDULE OF UP-COMING EVENTS

Jan. 23, Fri.	Lecture: Randall Henderson / Desert Magazine by Phil Brigandi - cost: \$5.00	Portola Com. Center	7:00 p.m.
Feb. 27, Fri.	Lecture: Jimmy Doolittle by Jonna Doolittle Hoppes, Jimmy's granddaughter - cost \$5.00	Portola Com. Center	7:00 p.m.
Mar. 3, Fri.	Reception with Pioneer Painters (all 90 years plus) Sally Ward, Carl Bray, Bill Bender	Society Firehouse	3 pm-7 pm
Mar. 3-14, 9 days	Art Show & Sale - Pioneer Painters Ten works from each artist to be displayed.	Society Firehouse	10 am-3 pm
Mar. 27, Fri.	Lecture: Salton Sea/Northshore Yacht Club/Dos Palmas by Jennie Kelly - cost \$5.00	Portola Com. Center	7:00 p.m.
Mar. 29, Sun.	Annual Ed Mullins Memorial Picnic - large pavilion Berger lunch by the Keedy Kids - \$10	Civic Center Park	11 social- 12 lunch
Apr. 24, Fri.	Lecture: Pre-history of Coachella Valley / Martinez Slide by Harry Quinn - cost \$5.00	Portola Com. Center	7:00 p.m.

Note: Written contributions (historical or otherwise) to this quarterly newsletter are welcomed by the editor. All such articles should be submitted to the Society office by the 15th of the month previous to publication. Items for the Spring 2009 issue will be due on or before February 15th.

- Ginny Folkers, Editor

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